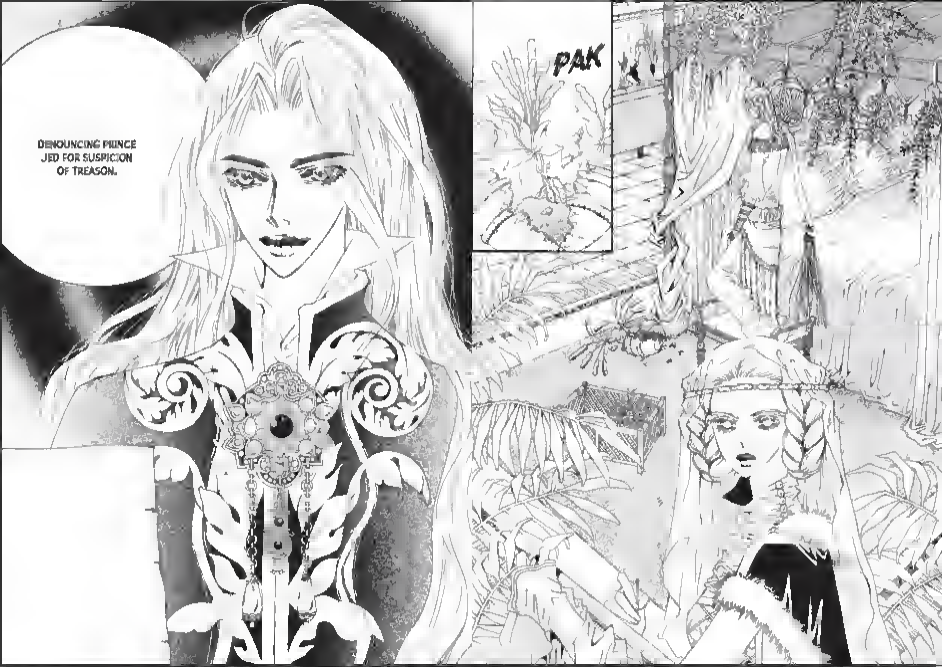
VOL. 8
CH. 1

Boy Princess

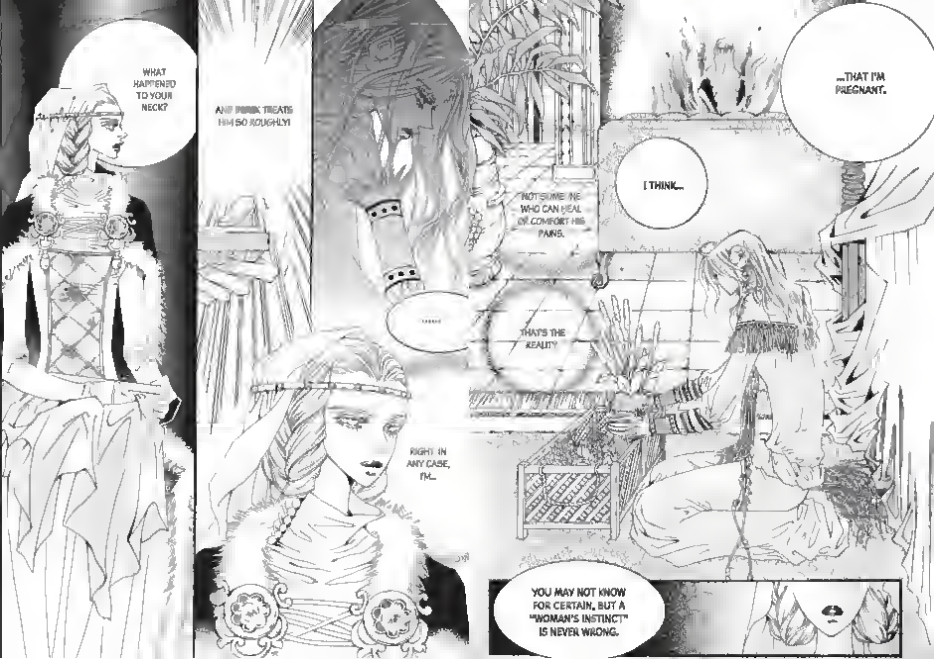
WAIT?! WAS THE PLAN SUPPOSED TO PROCEED THIS QUICKLY?
CALM
DIDN'T I HAVE MORE TIME? I DIDN'T EVEN GET A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN—
IS HE REALLY NOT BREATHING?
NICOLE!!
THIS IS JUST THE PLAN.
CALM DOWN.
I DIDN'T EVEN GET TO SEE YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES, AND YOU--?

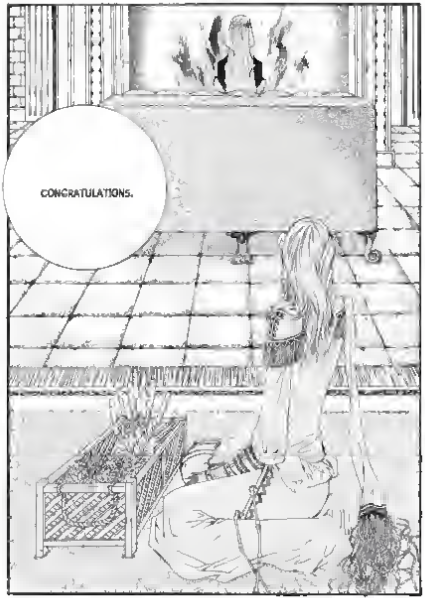
BUT WHAT IS THIS
OMINOUS FEELING?

I'M PRINCE NICOLE OF THE ERIN KINGDOM!
I REALLY GOT YOU THIS TIME, JEB.
SIRE, THE MINISTERS HAVE ALL GATHERED.
HMM...?
I'VE BEEN VERY PATIENT THIS ENTIRE TIME.
VERY WELL, FATHER-IN-LAW. THEN, AS WE AGREED, PLEASE GET EVERYONE'S SIGNATURE ON THIS DOCUMENT...


DENOUNCING PRINCE JED FOR SUSPICION OF TREASON.
PAK

ARE YOU HURT?
NO.
HE ALWAYS LOOKS FRAGILE ENOUGH TO BREAK AT ANY MOMENT. BUT HE LOOKS EVEN MORE TROUBLED TODAY.
THAT THIN AND SILVERY HAIR—
HIS BEAUTIFUL EYES HAVE NEVER LOOKED UPON ME PROPERLY.
THOSE LIPS WILL NEVER CALL MY NAME IN HIS LIFETIME.
BUT DEREK CAN HAVE HIM ANYTIME HE WANTS.
"
—I


WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR NECK?
AND PARIS TREATS HIM SO ROUGHLY!
NOT SOMEONE WHO CAN HEAL OR COMFORT HIS PAINS.
THAT'S THE REALITY
.....
RIGHT. IN ANY CASE, I'M...
I THINK...
...THAT I'M PREGNANT.
YOU MAY NOT KNOW FOR CERTAIN, BUT A "WOMAN'S INSTINCT" IS NEVER WRONG.


CONGRATULATIONS.

KAAHHH!!
CROWN PRINCESS! PRINCESS ELENA, PRINCE JED'S WIFE, HAS PASSED AWAY!
AND...
PRINCE... JED HAS BEEN ARRESTED AND IMPRISONED FOR SUSPICION OF TREASON.

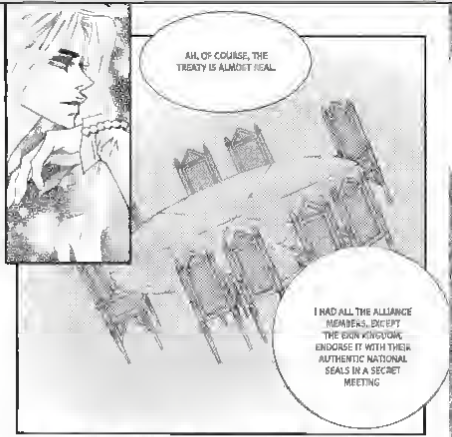
CLIKK

JED.
YES, AS YOU CAN SEE.
HMMM?
HOW COLDHEARTED! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT YOUR WIFE HAS TIED AND YOU'RE ON TRIAL FOR SUSPICION OF TREASON?
HOW DO YOU LIKE IT IN HERE? ISN'T IT A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE?

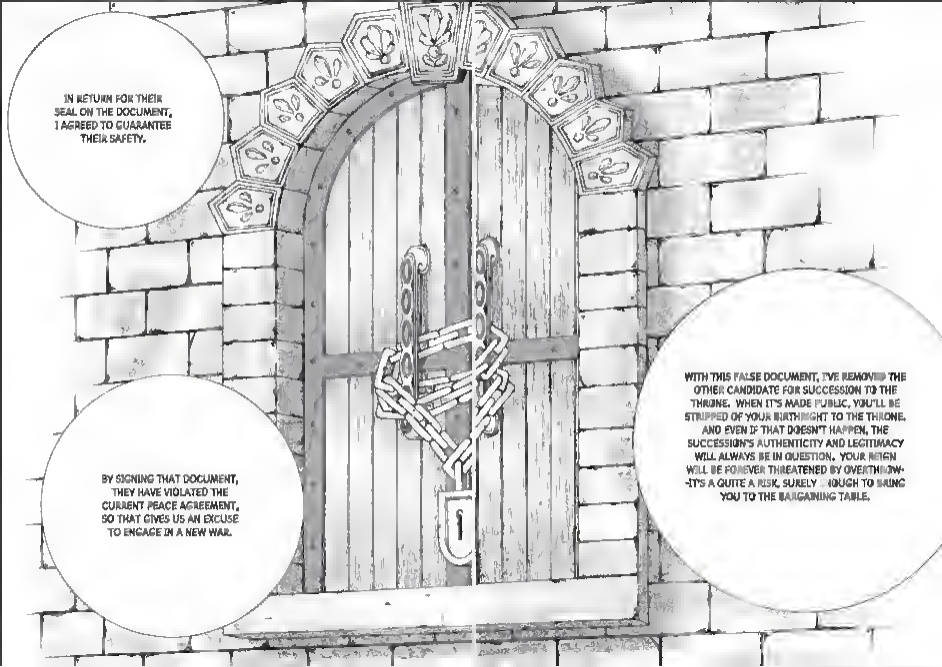
LIKE YOU SAID, IT'S ONLY SUSPICION.

ALRIGHT... FOR NOW.
BUT IF YOU "ADMIT" TO THE EVIDENCE THAT I "SCULPTED," IT WILL BECOME THE TRUTH.

FOR INSTANCE...
AS THE LEADER FOR THE ALLIANCE OF YOUR WIFE'S KINGDOM, YOU SOWED THE SEEDS OF CONSPIRACY
I CAUGHT THE MESSENGER CARRYING THE FINALIZED TREATY DURING THE ATTEMPTED DELIVERY— SOMETHING LIKE THAT.


AH, OF COURSE, THE TREATY IS ALMOST REAL.
I HAD ALL THE ALLIANCE MEMBERS, EXCEPT THE EDEN KINGDOM, ENDORSE IT WITH THEIR AUTHENTIC NATIONAL SEALS IN A SECRET MEETING

WHEN I HIGHLIGHTED YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE EDEN KINGDOM AND EMPHASIZED YOUR ABILITY TO MOBILIZE THE ARMY, I FOUND AMPLE LEVERAGE TO NEGOTIATE.
THE ALLIANCE BECAME NEAR-SIGHTED AND COULD ONLY THINK OF WARDING OFF THE LION NEAREST TO THEM.
FROM THERE, I OFFERED EACH ONE THE SAME LETHAL TERMS AND COMPLETED THE SECRET TREATY


IN RETURN FOR THEIR SEAL ON THE DOCUMENT, I AGREED TO GUARANTEE THEIR SAFETY.
BY SIGNING THAT DOCUMENT, THEY HAVE VIOLATED THE CURRENT PEACE AGREEMENT, SO THAT GIVES US AN EXCUSE TO ENGAGE IN A NEW WAR.
WITH THIS FALSE DOCUMENT, I'VE REMOVED THE OTHER CANDIDATE FOR SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE. WHEN IT'S MADE PUBLIC, YOU'LL BE STRIPPED OF YOUR BIRTHRIGHT TO THE THRONE. AND EVEN IF THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN, THE SUCCESSION'S AUTHENTICITY AND LEGITIMACY WILL ALWAYS BE IN QUESTION. YOUR REIGN WILL BE FOREVER THREATENED BY OVERTHROW- -IT'S A QUITE A RISK, SURELY ENOUGH TO BRING YOU TO THE BARGAINING TABLE.

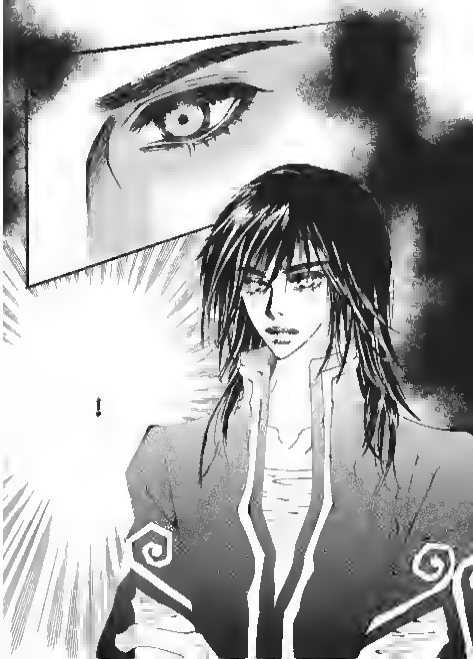
SO, THE CONCLUSION
IS...
IF YOU HELP ME ELIMINATE YOURSELF AS A RIVAL, I'LL GRANT YOU MERCY WHEN I'M KING- IS THIS NOT A TEMPTING PROPOSAL?
SPITEFUL FOOL. YOU MUST STILL HAVE SOME TRICK UP YOUR SLEEVE.

YES, IT'S ONLY "SUSPICION" FOR NOW. IF YOU STUBBORNLY DENY IT, THE PROCESS WILL JUST DRAG ON LONGER.
AND WE WON'T BE ABLE TO IGNORE THE UNREST OF THE SOLDIERS LOYAL TO YOU.
THAT IS WHY WE NEED TO CONCLUDE THIS MATTER AS FAST AS POSSIBLE.

I NEED YOUR CONFESSION...
CONFESS THAT EVERYTHING IS TRUE.
THE PUNISHMENT FOR TREASON IS DEATH REGARDLESS OF CLASS OR RANK. ARE YOU SO DESPERATE TO ELIMINATE ME?

IT'S NOT THAT I HAVEN'T CONSIDERED KEEPING YOU AT MY SIDE, DISPLAYING OUR IDEAL MOTHERHOOD, AND TOGETHER INCREASING THE WEALTH AND STRENGTH OF OUR KINGDOM.
BUT YOUR SHOES ARE TOO BIG FOR ME TO FILL WITH MY LIMITED BIRTHRIGHT.
NO MATTER HOW BEAUTIFUL THE SHOES MAY BE. IF I CAN'T WEAR THEM, ISN'T IT BETTER JUST TO DESTROY THEM? IF I JUST LET THEM SIT IN FRONT OF ME UNWORN, THEY WOULD ONLY DISTRACT PEOPLE'S ATTENTION.

NOW, NO MORE OF THIS. LET'S TALK ABOUT MORE IMMEDIATE THINGS.
FOR INSTANCE–
AFTER THE FUNERAL THAT WE'RE CURRENTLY HOLDING...
WILL YOUR BRIDE WAKE UP, AS I PLANNED– SOMETHING LIKE THIS.



JEE...
NOW I GET THE REACTION I WANTED.
SO FOOLISH!

HOW DID YOU DEVELOP SUCH A WEAK SPOT?

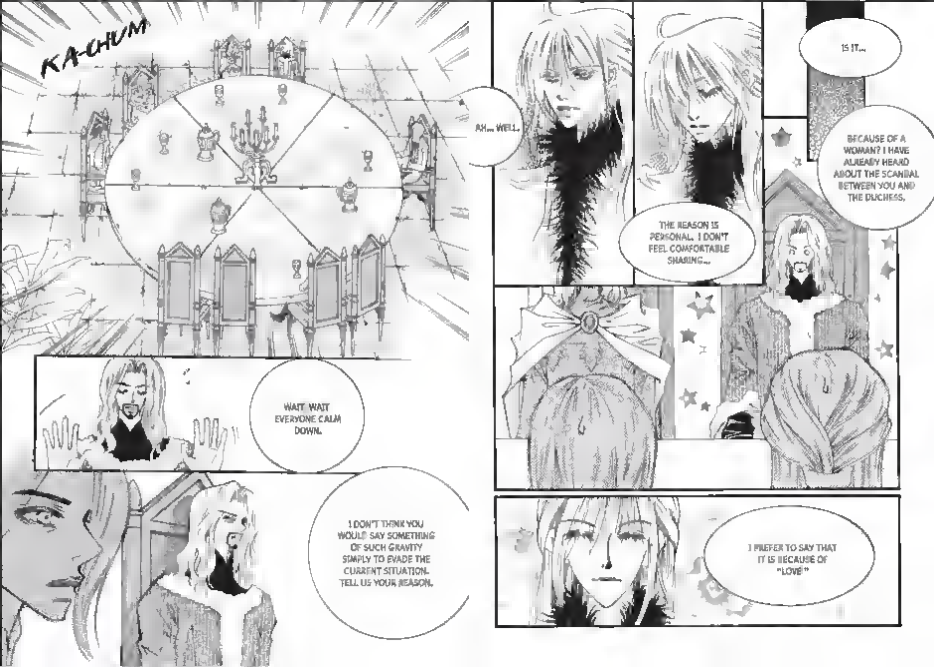
HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW?
NO WAY...?!

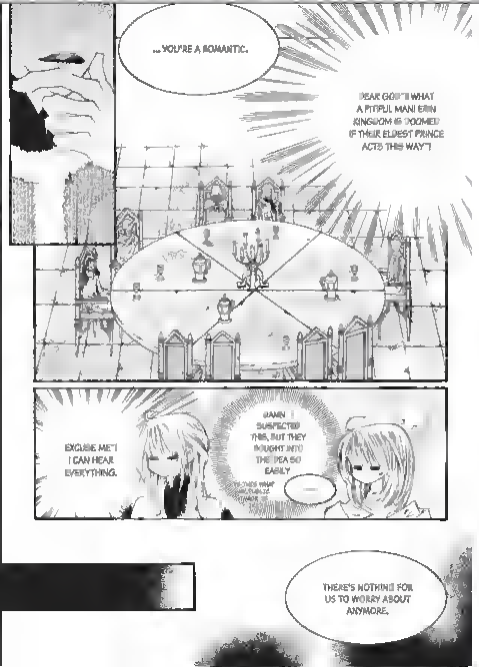
WILL THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION?
HMM~ WELL...

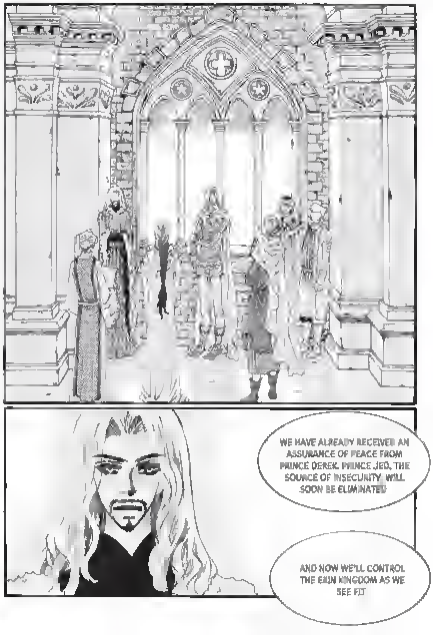
THE PRINCE WON'T WAKE UP IF HE DOESN'T DRINK THIS ANTIDOTE WITHIN THREE DAYS.

DID YOU WATCH HIM DRINK THE POTION?
IT MUST HAVE BEEN VERY PAINFUL, YET YOU ENDURE IT VERY WELL.
NICOLE!!
WHAT HAVE I DONE?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU'RE GIVING UP THE THRONE?
I MEAN THAT I HAVE NO INTEREST IN BEING THE SUCCESSOR TO THE THRONE.
GIVE UP THE THRONE? THE THRONE CURRENTLY BELONGS TO MY FATHER.
THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEANT
WE HAVE AGREED TO GIVE THE SUCCESSION TO MY BROTHER, PRINCE JUNE.


KA-CHUM
AH... WELL.
WAIT. WAIT EVERYONE CALM DOWN.
I DON'T THINK YOU WOULD SAY SOMETHING OF SUCH GRAVITY SIMPLY TO EVADE THE CURRENT SITUATION. TELL US YOUR REASON.
THE REASON IS PERSONAL. I DON'T FEEL COMFORTABLE SHARING...
IS IT...
BECAUSE OF A WOMAN? I HAVE ALREADY HEARD ABOUT THE SCANDAL BETWEEN YOU AND THE DUCHESS.
I PREFER TO SAY THAT IT IS BECAUSE OF "LOVE"!


... YOU'RE A ROMANTIC.
"DEAR GOD!" IS WHAT A PITIFUL MAN! ERIN KINGDOM IS "DOOMED" IF THEIR ELDEST PRINCE ACTS THIS WAY"!
EXCUSE ME"! I CAN HEAR EVERYTHING.
DAMN I SUSPECTED THIS, BUT THEY BOUGHT INTO THE TEA SO EASILY
THERE'S NOTHING FOR US TO WORRY ABOUT ANYMORE.


WE HAVE ALREADY RECEIVED AN ASSURANCE OF PEACE FROM PRINCE DEREK. PRINCE JED, THE SOURCE OF INSECURITY, WILL SOON BE ELIMINATED
AND NOW WE'LL CONTROL THE ERIN KINGDOM AS WE SEE FIT

HUH, THE PROBLEM IS--
?
THAT WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY PUBLIC CONNECTIONS TO ENFORCE OUR SECRET NEGOTIATION.
WHEN PRINCE JED HAS BEEN ELIMINATED THAT WILL LEAVE PRINCESS REINY AS THE ONLY USEABLE BLOODLINE.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
SHE'S THE WOMAN MOST LOVED BY THE PEOPLE IN PLACE OF THE ABSENT QUEEN..
SHE'S THE SAFEST CONTRACT OF PUBLIC SENTIMENT UNTIL PRINCE DEREK BECOMES KING.
IN SHORT IF WE HAVE HER...

SHE BECOMES OUR HOSTAGE. THEN, WE'LL HAVE COMPLETE SECURITY AND PEACE WITH HER KINGDOM.
DAMN! I KNEW SOMETHING WAS FISHY THE MOMENT WE HEARD THAT THEY HAD ALL GATHERED EARLY
A SECRET NEGOTIATION WITH PRINCE DEREK AND THE ELIMINATION OF PRINCE JAFF—
JUST WHAT IS GOING ON IN THIS COUNTRY RIGHT NOW?

SLEEK..
KOONG

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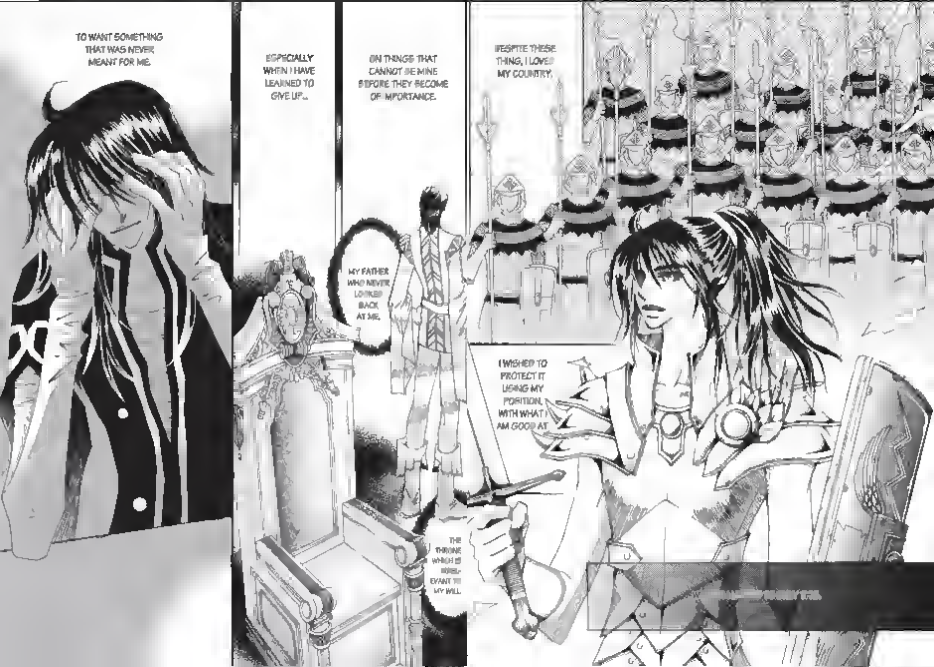
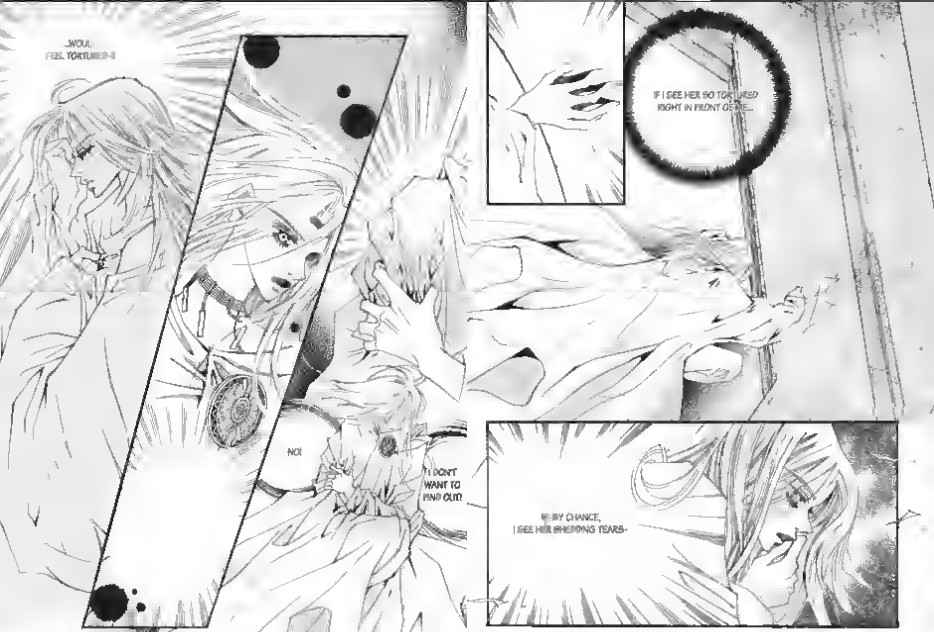
CH. 2

Boy Princess


TO WANT SOMETHING THAT WAS NEVER MEANT FOR ME.
ESPECIALLY WHEN I HAVE LEARNED TO GIVE UP...
ON THINGS THAT CANNOT BE MINE BEFORE THEY BECOME OF IMPORTANCE.
MY FATHER WHO NEVER LOOKED BACK AT ME.
DESPITE THESE THING, I LOVE MY COUNTRY.
I WISHED TO PROTECT IT USING MY POSITION, WITH WHAT I AM GOOD AT.
THE THRONE WHICH IS RIGHTFULLY MINE TO MY WILL.

NICOLE...
I'M SORRY.
THERE CAN BE ONLY ONE DECISION TO MAKE FOR ME.
SO PLEASE...
DON'T CRY SO MUCH...

PRINCE JEIR.
YOU MUST BE TORTURED.
THIS IS ONLY AN OUNCE OF THE VENGEANCE I HAVE INSIDE ME.
IF I CAN SHOW HER WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE NOW--!
AIEE!!
LOOK AT ME AND...
EVEN SHE WHO DIDN'T HESITATE A MOMENT TO ABANDON ME--HER, CHILE...


...WOULD I FEEL TORTURED?
NO!
I DON'T WANT TO FIND OUT!
IF I SEE HER SO TORTURED RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME...
IF BY CHANCE, I SEE HER WEEPING TEARS-

THEN I WON'T BE ABLE TO FORGIVE ANYONE.
SWAM-
TELL ME WHEN YOU FIND THE RIGHT MATCH.
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW MY NAME DO YOU?
I THINK I'M PREGNANT.

NO ONE CAN EXERCISE SUCH POWER OVER ME
...A "WOMAN'S INSTINCT" IS NEVER WRONG.
I THINK I'M PREGNANT
WHAT IS THIS...
IT'S REALLY THESE YEARS THAT I'M CONFUSED ABOUT.
WHO ARE THEY FOR?

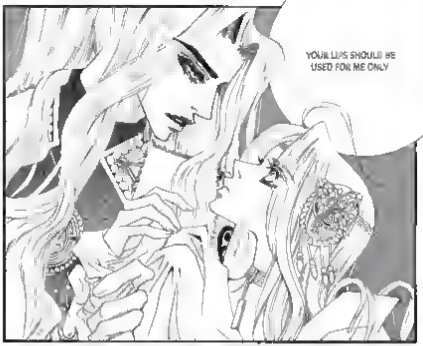
YOU'RE LATE.
I WAS ABOUT TO SEND FOR YOU.

I'M SORRY
LICK
OF COURSE...
YOU CRIED.
?
...

EVEN IF I'M AN ANIMAL, I DON'T WISH TO EVER MAKE YOU LAY DOWN IN A TOMB
SO DON'T GIVE ME THAT FACE,
I'LL GIVE HIM THE POTION NOW
KNIK
HAHAH-- NO MATTER HOW I LOOK AT HIM, HE'S STILL JUST A KID. JED HAS STRANGE TASTE...
AH WAS YOUNGER,
WHEN HE FELL IN LOVE.
THOUGH WE'RE SAVING HIM NOW TO SHOW JED...

HE'LL BE TROUBLE IN THE LONG RUN.
WE'LL ELIMINATE HIM AS SOON AS JED DIES
THERE'S ALREADY...
A DEADLY SIDE-EFFECT TO THIS POTION.
SIDE-EFFECT? DEADLY?
HE WON'T BE ABLE TO TALK...
AND HE'LL LOSE HIS MEMORY
I
A MUTE AND A RETARD-
...

THAT'S NOT SO BAD.
AND WE'LL BE ABLE TO SELL HIM BACK TO THE EMIR HIMSELF AT A GOOD PRICE.
ARE THOSE SYMPTOMS TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT?
GIVE THAT HERE.
I'LL DO IT IF IT MUST BE GIVEN THROUGH ONE'S LIPS.
IT'S AN ANTIDOTE, BUT IT'S STILL DEADLY.
THAT DEPENDS ON HIS RECUPERATIVE POWER, BUT THE POTION IS SO DEADLY BY ITSELF THAT IT'S HARD TO SAY
THEN.


YOUR LIPS SHOULD BE USED FOR ME ONLY

THE REASON I DON'T CARE ABOUT YOUR TEARS IS BECAUSE... I'VE ABANDONED HOPE THAT YOUR HEART WILL FOLLOW AFTER ME.

BUT OTHER THAN THAT

EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU DOWN TO THE LAST STRAND OF YOUR HAIR IS MINE.

DID YOU CALL FOR ME?

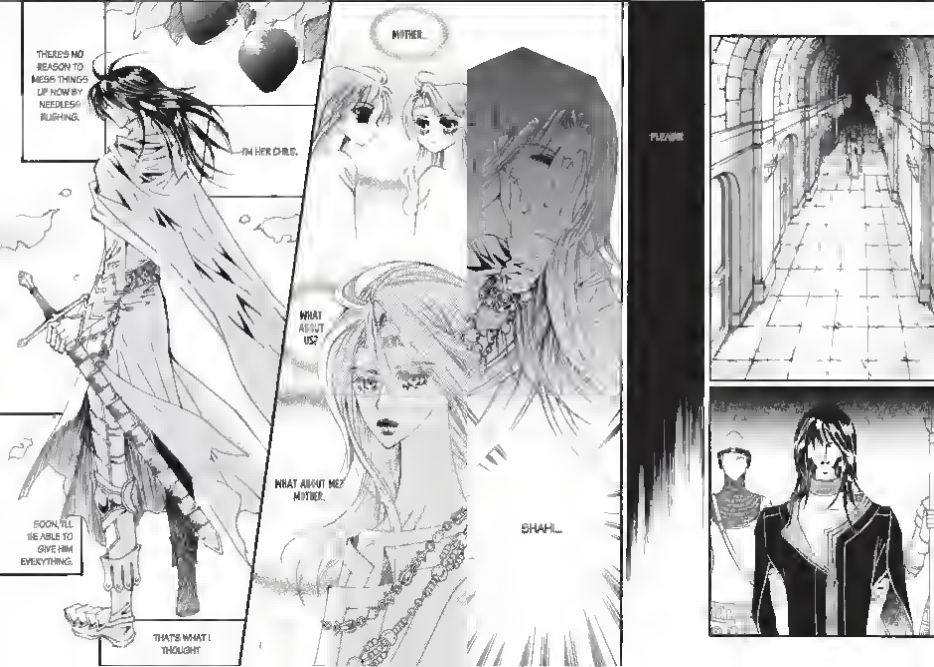
COME IN.
PRINCE JED WILL BE EXECUTED.
THERE'S A TRIAL PENDING BUT THAT'S JUST A FORMALITY
THEY'VE FINISHED PREPARATIONS FOR THAT, AS WELL. THINGS WILL NOW PROCEED ACCORDING TO PRINCE DEREK'S WISHES.
HOW IS JYD? HAS HIS SITUATION IMPROVED?
OF COURSE NOT. THERE'S NO REASON FOR IT TO IMPROVE AT THIS STAGE.

I HAD WISHED PRINCE JED COULD HAVE BEEN A SHIELD A LITTLE LONGER.
BUT NOW I JUST WISH FOR THE KING'S WELL BEING.
AFTER ALL, IT'S THE KING WHO CAN USE HIM AS A LAST RESOURCE.
SHAM
THIS ISN'T THE ORIGINAL PLAN.
WHY?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
PLEASE LOOK AFTER MY CHILDREN.
MOTHER...
THEN...
WHAT ABOUT US?

I CHANGED!! INTO THE SEX THAT CAN BEAR CHILDREN...
AND HAD THEM.
THEY WERE RAISED BY THE VILLAGE...
AND I, AS THE NEXT TRIBAL LEADER, WAS TOO BUSY TRYING TO FIND WAYS FOR MY TRIBE TO SURVIVE.
THEN, WHEN I SAW THEM ONE DAY...
ONE CHILD SEEMED SO MUCH LIKE HER THAT IT HURT TO LOOK.
AND THE OTHER CHILD MADE ME UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE BURNING DESIRE IN HIS EYES FOR SOMETHING THAT I NEVER HAD FROM THE BEGINNING.
KELLY...
WHEN SHE WAS WITH ME AND EVEN AFTER SHE LEFT...
SHE WAS THE ONLY PERSON WHO ALWAYS REMAINED WITH ME WITHOUT FADING AWAY IN MY MEMORY

THE REASON I LIVED ON EVEN AFTER SHE DIED...
WAS NOT SIMPLY BECAUSE I WANTED TO HOLD ONTO OUR LOVE AND CHERISH IT.
I HAD TO SURVIVE EVEN IF IT MEANT LIVING LIKE A PARASITE HERE AND THERE.
BECAUSE I HAD LIVES TO PROTECT.
I HAD TO KEEP MY PROMISE TO HER, AND I HAD TO FIND A WAY TO SECURE OUR LIVES.
PRINCE JED MUST BECOME KING.
I GOT THIS FAR USING HER DEATH AS A STEPPING STONE.
I SPIED ON THE GAPS BETWEEN POWERS, SURROWED N AND PREPARED SAFETY NETS REGARDLESS OF WHICH SIDE PREVAILED.
BUT SEDUCING HIM...
I REFUSED IT IMMEDIATELY
I'VE NEVER CONSIDERED TAKING THAT PATH.

WHY?
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HIM. HOW COULD HE NOT HAVE ANY DESIRE WHEN RAISED IN HIS ROYAL SURROUNDINGS?
I-IF...THAT CAN'T BE TRUE. HE JUST KNOWS HOW TO CONTROL HIMSELF COMPLETELY...
I JUST WANT TO GET HIM OUT OF THIS SITUATION SAFELY
TRUMP.
THE FIRST THING WE MUST DO IS GAIN HIS TRUST
I UNDERSTAND. ALLOW ME TO HANDLE IT
IF THERE'S ONE THING I WANT...
IT'S THAT CHILD
HOW LONG HAVE I PREPARED FOR THIS PATH.


THERE'S NO REASON TO MESS THINGS UP NOW BY NEEDLESSLY RUSHING.
I'M HER CHILD.
SOON, I'LL BE ABLE TO GIVE HIM EVERYTHING.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT
MOTHER...
WHAT ABOUT US?
WHAT ABOUT ME? MOTHER...
SHAHL
PLEASE

KHIK
I

VOL. 8
CH. 3

Boy Princess

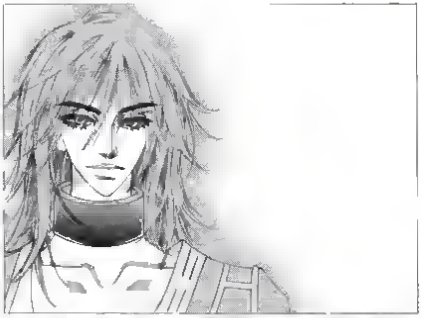
HE'S MY NEW NIGHT ATTENDANT
WHY~

WHY ARE YOU GOING TO THIS EXTENT? WHAT IS IT YOU WANT TO SHOW ME?
POWER.
THAT I HAVE IT--
AND THAT I CAN EXERCISE IT IN ANY WAY

THE SAFETY OF THAT CHILD WAS MY FINAL DEMAND
IT WAS,
BUT...
AS YOU CAN SEE...
HE CAN'T EVEN REMEMBER YOU NOW HE CAN'T TALK EITHER.

HE'S JUST AN EMPTY SHELL...
HE'S NOT THE BOY THAT YOU ONCE KNEW
HE CAN'T EVEN TALK—
WILL SACRIFICING YOUR LIFE FOR HIM STILL HAVE MEANING?
THERE WILL BE NO MEANING...
FOR HIM RIGHT NOW
THAT'S ONE OF THE REASONS WHY I PLAYED ALONG THIS FAR.
BUT I HAVE NO DESIRE TO USE HIM AS AN EXCUSE.

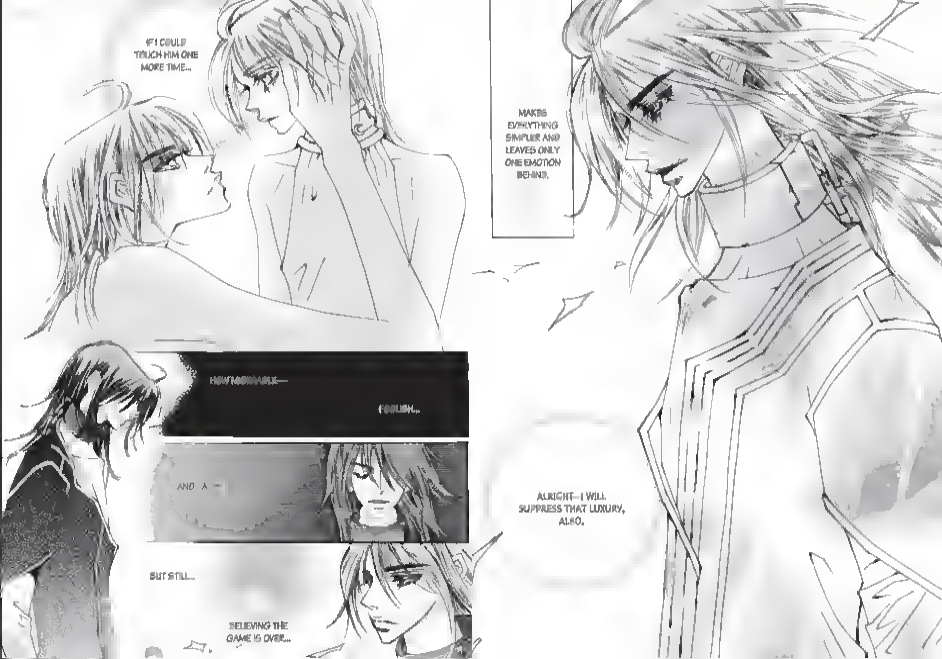
I JUST...
HE JUST ACCIDENTALLY GOT INVOLVED IN MY SITUATION SO I WANTED TO GET HIM OUT
I DON'T WANT THAT REASON TO BURDEN HIM IN HIS LIFE AHEAD.
YES, NICOLE. FORGET DON'T REMEMBER.
DON'T CRY
THIS IS WHY...
YOU CAN'T BE KING, JED.



PITIFUL BOY
NOW THAT I'VE VERIFIED THAT HIS VALUE HASN'T FALLEN EVEN IN HIS PRESENT CONDITION...
SHALL WE CONCLUDE OUR AGREEMENT?

WHEN YOUR DEATH PENALTY IS CONFIRMED AND THE CHARGE IS EXECUTED I'LL SEND THIS BOY BACK HOME.
OF COURSE, A PEACE TREATY WITH THE ERIN KINGDOM MUST BE SIGNED FIRST
OUR AGREEMENT IS CRUCIAL TO THE NATIONAL INTEREST. SO IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY FORGOTTEN YOUR DUTY AS A PRINCE, YOU MUST ACCEPT THIS REALITY

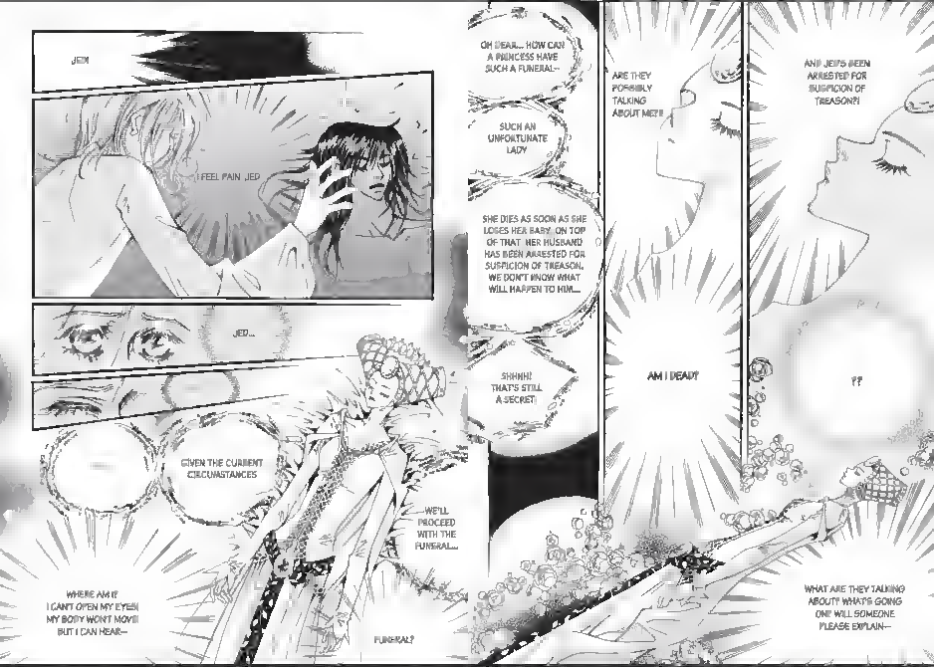
BECAUSE THAT WILL BE AN ISSUE BETWEEN THE ERIN KINGDOM AND OUR COUNTRY IN THE FUTURE.
IN RETURN, I PROMISE TO RETURN THIS PRINCE WITHOUT EVEN HARMING THE TIPS OF HIS HAIR.
HERE! A MAN WHO TALKS TO ME ABOUT THE FUTURE AFTER MY DEATH.
YES... I CAN ENTRUST GIVE HIM CONTROL OF MY COUNTRY...
YES, I'LL DO AS YOU WISH
THIS IS... AS FAR AS I'LL GO.
PRINCE GLENHIL
SO...
THIS CHILD AND...
PLEASE, THIS CHILD—
NICOLE...
IF I CAN HOLD YOU...
JUST ONE MORE TIME

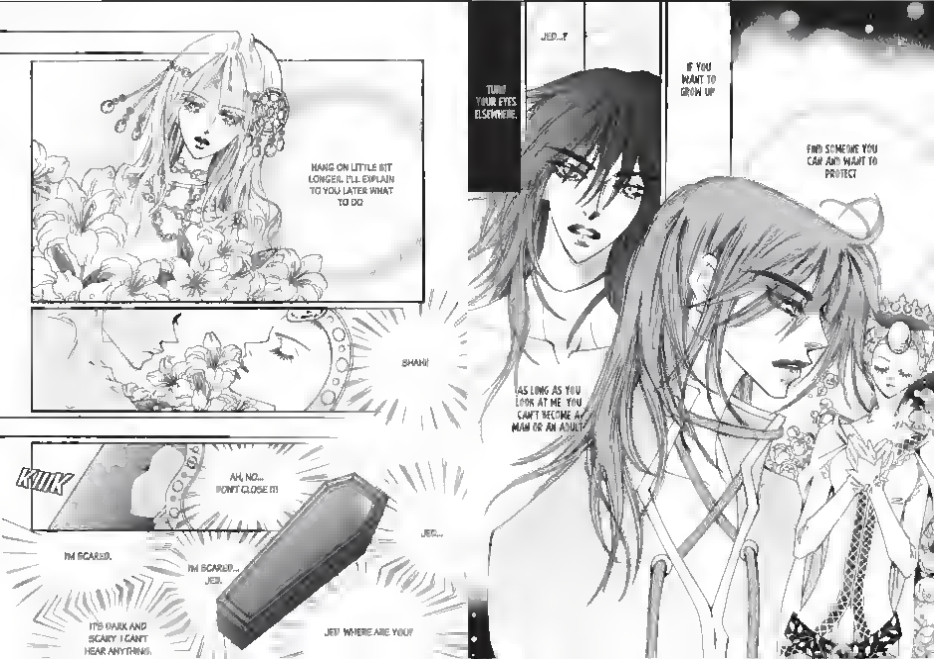

IF I COULD TOUCH HIM ONE MORE TIME...
MAKES EVERYTHING SIMPLER AND LEAVES ONLY ONE EMOTION BEHIND.
ALRIGHT—I WILL SUPPRESS THAT LUXURY, ALSO.
BUT STILL...
BELIEVING THE GAME IS OVER...

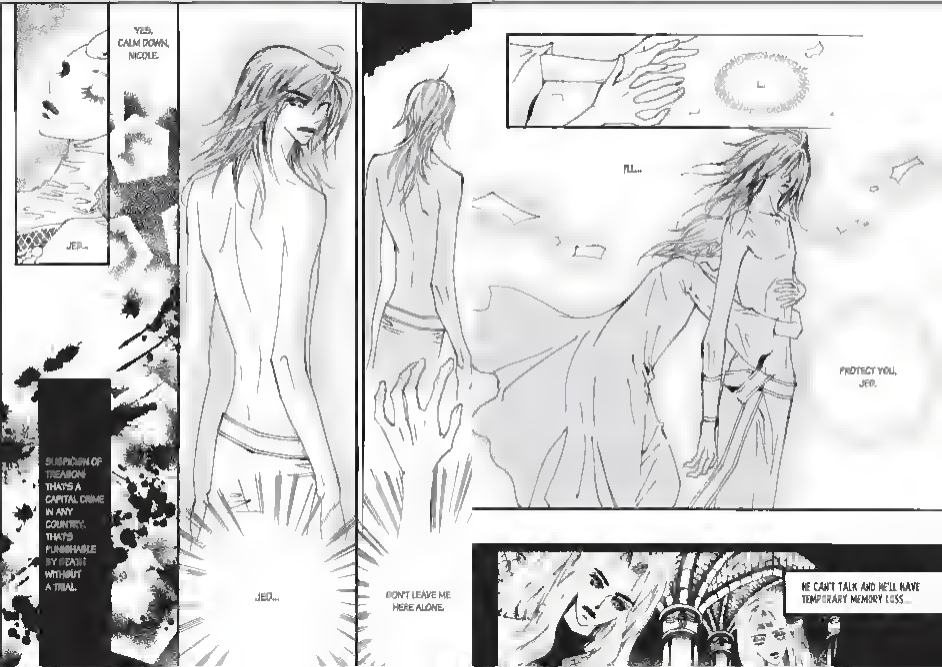
I'LL TAKE HIM AWAY.
BRING HIM HERE.
OH--
YOU COME.
FLOP

...
REST WELL..
TAKE HIM AWAY--
IMPOSE FOOL.
THEN...
KOOONG
CLIK
CLIK
PUT ME DOWN.

TONK
ARE YOU ALL...?
I WAS WORRIED
BUT YOU
WELL.
SHUT UP!
JUST WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
JED!


JEDI
I FEEL PAIN, JED
JED...
GIVEN THE CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES
WE'LL PROCEED WITH THE FUNERAL...
WHERE AM I?
I CAN'T OPEN MY EYES!
MY BODY WON'T MOVE!
BUT I CAN HEAR--
FUNERAL?
OH DEAR... HOW CAN A PRINCESS HAVE SUCH A FUNERAL--
SUCH AN UNFORTUNATE LADY
SHE DIES AS SOON AS SHE LOSES HER BABY. ON TOP OF THAT, HER HUSBAND HAS BEEN ARRESTED FOR SUSPICION OF TREASON. WE DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO HIM...
SHHHH! THAT'S STILL A SECRET
ARE THEY POSSIBLY TALKING ABOUT ME?!
AM I DEAD?
AND JEDI'S BEEN ARRESTED FOR SUSPICION OF TREASON?!
??
WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT? WHAT'S GOING ON? WILL SOMEONE PLEASE EXPLAIN--

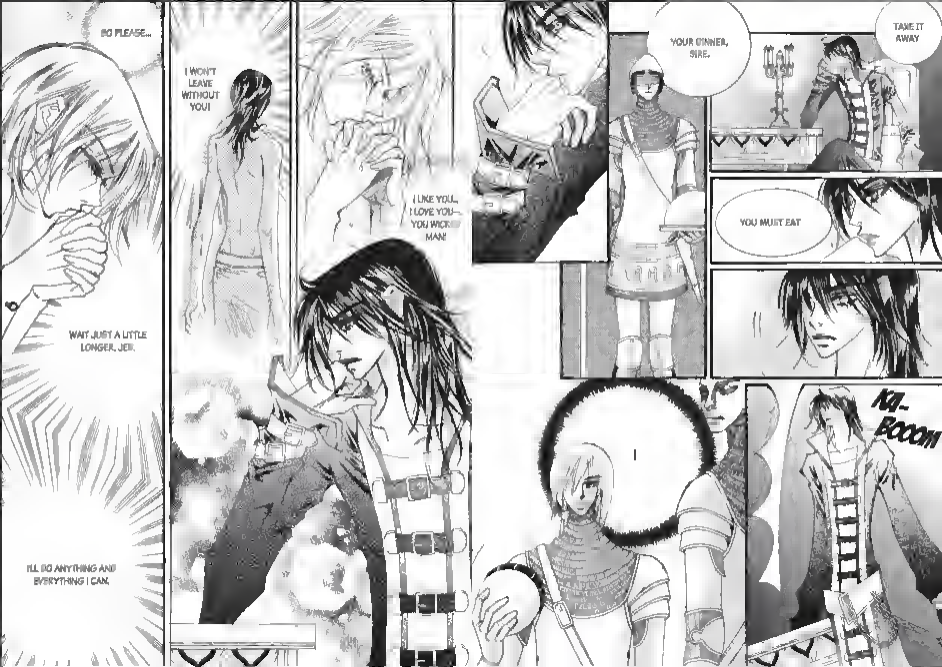

HANG ON LITTLE BIT LONGER. I'LL EXPLAIN TO YOU LATER WHAT TO DO
SHAH!
KIIIK
AH, NO... WON'T CLOSE IT!
I'M SCARED.
I'M SCARED... JED...
JED...
IT'S DARK AND SCARY. I CAN'T HEAR ANYTHING.
JED! WHERE ARE YOU?
TURN YOUR EYES ELSEWHERE.
JED...?
IF YOU WANT TO GROW UP
FIND SOMEONE YOU CAN AND WANT TO PROTECT
AS LONG AS YOU LOOK AT ME YOU CAN'T BECOME A MAN OR AN ADULT


YES, CALM DOWN, NICOLE.
JED...
SUSPICION OF TREASON. THAT'S A CAPITAL CRIME IN ANY COUNTRY. THAT'S PUNISHABLE BY DEATH WITHOUT A TRIAL.
JED...
DON'T LEAVE ME HERE ALONE.
I'LL...
PROTECT YOU, JED.
HE CAN'T TALK AND HE'LL HAVE TEMPORARY MEMORY LOSS...

JED!
I DON'T WANT THAT REASON TO BURDEN HIM IN HIS LIFE AHEAD.
I CAN HEAR EVERYTHING!
YOU BAD MAN~
NO... NO.
I'LL GET CAUGHT IF I SHOW EMOTION. I MUST CONTROL MYSELF!
YOU'RE GOING TO DIE FOR ME AND YOU WANT ME TO FORGET ABOUT IT?
DON'T CRY?

WHOSE SIDE ARE YOU ON?
I ASKED YOU WHOSE SIDE YOU ARE ON.
.....
THE SIDE WHERE MY TRIBE CAN SURVIVE.
WE DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY TO CARE ABOUT THE QUALITY OF LIFE, BECAUSE WE SIMPLY MUST SURVIVE.
DRINK THIS AND SLEEP
THIS PLACE WILL BE SAFER THAN MY ROOM IN THE PALACE FOR AWHILE.
.....
NICOLE?

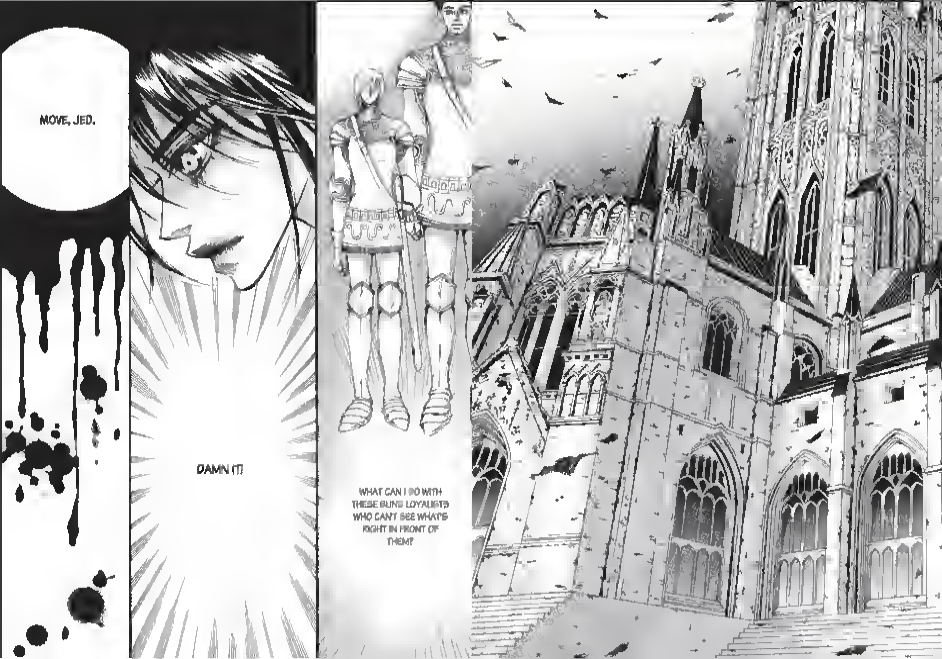
SO IS JED'S DEATH THE WAY YOUR TRIBE CAN SURVIVE?
HE'LL MOVE.
FLICK
SHAHH
TOSS
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE UP TO, BUT I WON'T JUST SIT AROUND AND LET YOU DO IT.
ABOUT WHO HAS THE POWER TO SAVE HIM IN THIS SITUATION, ABOUT WHO I NEED TO SEE!
I'VE BEEN THINKING ALL THIS TIME...
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN? WHAT ARE YOU UP TO NOW?
REST FOR NOW
I'LL BRING YOU SOME FRESH CLOTHES. THEN YOU'LL BE CHANGE INTO TOMORROW


SO PLEASE...
WAIT JUST A LITTLE LONGER, JER.
I'LL DO ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING I CAN.
I WON'T LEAVE WITHOUT YOU!
I LIKE YOU... I LOVE YOU... YOU WICKED MAN!
YOUR DINNER, SIRE.
TAKE IT AWAY
YOU MUST EAT
KA-BOOOM

HOW?
NO. WE WERE INFORMED WELL IN ADVANCE AND WERE PREPARED.
THE SECRET APOTHECARY WAS SEEN ARRIVING AS INFORMANTS.
THE CASTLE SHOULD BE BLOCKADED. NO ONE ON THE OUTSIDE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THIS--
FOOLS! THIS IS A TRAP!
YES. WE KNOW WHAT THEY'VE PLANNED FOR YOU LORD. YOU'RE ABOUT TO LOSE YOUR LIFE FACING A DISGRACEFUL ACCUSATION.
STUMBLE
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING?
YOUR ARMY IS HIDING IN AMBUSH AROUND THE CASTLE. JUST GIVE THE COMMAND, AND WE'LL IMMEDIATELY LAY SIEGE ON THE CASTLE.

YOU'RE ALREADY FALSELY ACCUSED OF COMMITTING TREASON.
IF THE UNTRUTH BECOMES REALITY WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE HOW IT BECAME TRUE?
YOU'RE ASKING ME...
SO?
TO DRAG MY MEN INTO THIS CHARGE OF TREASON, AS WELL?
WE WON'T BE CHARGED WITH TREASON.
?
BECAUSE...
WE'LL BE KING

YOUR ARMY'S ACTIONS WILL BE THE FINAL EVIDENCE OF YOUR TREASON.
YES, JUD.
THERE WILL BE NO NEED FOR A TRIAL.
AND I'LL KILL YOU ON THE SPOT
MOVE.


MOVE, JED.
DAMN IT!
WHAT CAN I DO WITH THESE GUNS LOYALISTS WHO CAN'T SEE WHAT'S RIGHT IN FRONT OF THEM?

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Boy Princess

AH, I HATE THIS WRETCHED WEATHER.
YEAH, THE CASTLE IS IN TURMOIL AS IT IS.
HUH? WHO'S THAT MAN OVER THERE
WE'VE BROUGHT THE CURTAINS.
GOOD.
BLOCK THE WINDOW WELL SO THE WIND DOESN'T COME IN.
IT LOOKS LIKE THE APOTHECARY
WHY IS HE GOING THERE AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?
WHERE THE KING LIVES!
AND I HAVE A SLIGHT HEADACHE. GET ME THE APOTHECARY
YEAH, THAT'S...
MAAM? AH, WELL...
?

THE APOTHECARY?
YES, YOUR MAJESTY. JUST NOW, HE URGENTLY BEGS TO HAVE YOUR ATTENDANCE.
URGENTLY?
.....
LET HIM IN.
WHAT BRINGS YOU AT SUCH AN HOUR?

YOUR MAJESTY.
WHO ARE YOU? YOU'RE NOT THE APOTHECARY!
...FATHER.
TOKK...
I HOPE YOU'RE WELL.
THEN, ARE YOU...
...A GHOST?
SO
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT SO URGENTLY THAT YOU'D VISIT ME LIKE A GHOST IN THE NIGHT?

PLEASE...
PLEASE SAVE HIM, YOUR MAJESTY.
AND YOU.
YES, YOUR MAJESTY.
AREN'T YOU A BOY?
I'M PRINCE NICOLE, THE YOUNGEST PRINCE OF THE ERIN KINGDOM. I WEDDED PRINCE JET IN MY SISTER'S PLACE.
YOU'RE A BOLD CHILD. THEN IS IT JED WHO YOU'RE ASKING ME TO SAVE?
YES YOUR MAJESTY

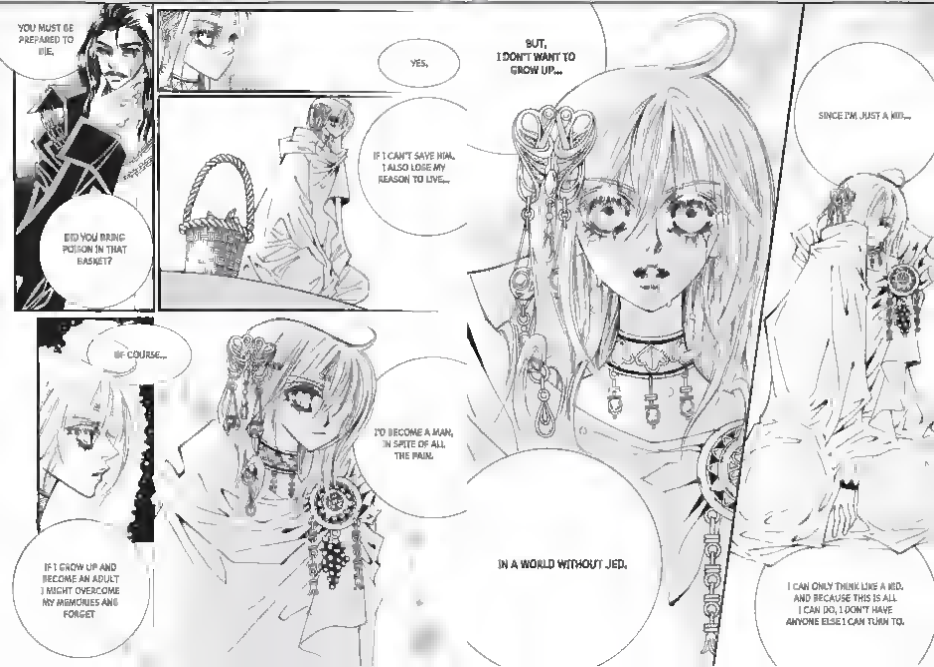
WHY SHOULD I?
BECAUSE...
YOU'RE...
HIS FATHER.

.....
AND I LET JED LIVE LONG AGO SO I COULD USE HIM FOR THIS PURPOSE.
PURPOSE?
YES, AT THAT TIME...
THAT TIME?
YOU'RE NAIVE.
I'M A STRONG KING BEFORE I'M A FATHER.
THAT TIME WHEN THAT WOMAN ENDED HER OWN LIFE AND LEFT MY SIDE.

THAT WOMAN! WHOS HE TALKING ABOUT?
A BEAUTIFUL AND SPITEFUL WOMAN LIKE NO OTHER.
I WANTED HER, AND WANTED... AND WANTED.
BUT SHE DIDN'T GIVE ME A WINK OF HER HEART NOT EVEN AT THE VERY END.
WHEN SHE BECAME A MOTHER, SHE GAVE ALL HER LOVE ONLY TO HER CHILDREN
SO I TORTURED HER, JUST AS SHE TORTURED ME.
IN THE END...
I MADE HER FEEL MISERY I TORE HER HEART TO PIECES AND MADE HER SHED TEARS OF BLOOD AS SHE CLUNG TO ME, KISSING ME AND BEGGING.
I DID IT WITHOUT LAYING A SINGLE FINGER ON HER.
JUDY!
WHEN I DID...
THAT SHREW!! WOMAN...

KNOWING THAT SHE WAS THE ULTIMATE TARGET OF MY TORTURE...
KILLED HERSELF
SHE HAD BEEN TAKING SMALL DOSES OF POISON, AND SHE PRETENDED TO BE SICK USING ITS EFFECT
SHE SUMMONED THE HERBALIST TRIBE LEADER INTO THE CASTLE,
AND SHE SENT THE TRIBE LEADER TO HER RIVAL, WHO WAS BLINDED BY HER OWN AMBITION, TO MAKE A DEAL WITH HER OWN LIFE.
FLOP
YOU... YOU MEAN JED'S MOTHER, THE QUEEN- WASN'T POISONED TO DEATH? SHE TOOK HER OWN LIFE?
IN ORDER TO PROTECT HER CHILDREN FROM YOU?
BRRRR
BRRRR
AHHH. I WAS WRONG—
JED. I CAN'T SAVE YOU. I CAN'T SAVE ANYONE FROM THIS MAN.

YOUR MAJESTY
THERE WILL BE NO ONE BESIDE YOU IF IT WASN'T FOR YOUR CROWN. NO ONE WOULD SPEAK A WORD TO YOU...
OR CRY FOR YOU.
DO YOU POSSIBLY WANT THAT AS WELL?


YOU MUST BE PREPARED TO DIE.
DID YOU BRING POISON IN THAT BASKET?
YES.
IF I CAN'T SAVE HIM, I ALSO LOSE MY REASON TO LIVE...
BUT, I DON'T WANT TO GROW UP...
SINCE I'M JUST A KID...
I CAN ONLY THINK LIKE A KID. AND BECAUSE THIS IS ALL I CAN DO, I DON'T HAVE ANYONE ELSE I CAN TURN TO.
IN A WORLD WITHOUT JED.
IF COURSE...
I'D BECOME A MAN, IN SPITE OF ALL THE PAIN.
IF I GROW UP AND BECOME AN ADULT I MIGHT OVERCOME MY MEMORIES AND FORGET

AS LONG AS I LIVE, I'LL BE USED AS A TOOL TO FIND FAULT IN THE EMPEROR.
EVEN IF I LIVE AS A PRINCE WITHOUT ANY AWARENESS OF WHAT THE WORLD SAYS ABOUT ME, I STILL DON'T WANT TO LOSE MY SELF-RESPECT.
BUT I ACTUALLY THINK THIS SITUATION IS FOR THE BEST, YOUR MAJESTY...
IF BEING A KING MEANS BECOMING SOMEONE LIKE YOU,
I ONLY HOPE THAT...
JIO DOESN'T LEARN ABOUT THIS TRUTH.
BECAUSE WHAT HE WANTS IS FOR ME TO REMAIN ALIVE AND SAFE.
DO I LOOK UNFORTUNATE?

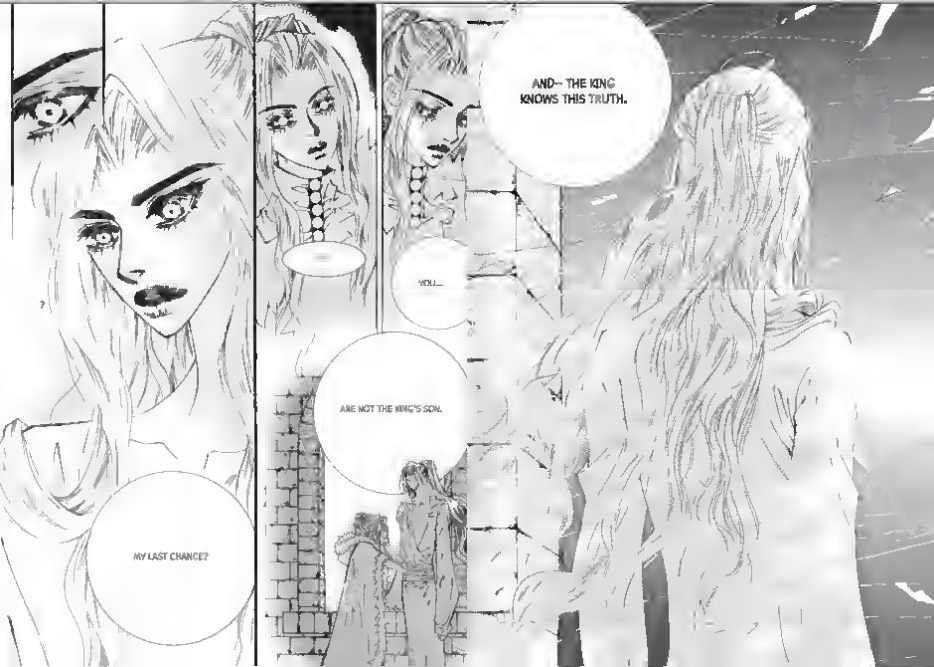
BECAUSE NO ONE WOULD SPEAK TO ME OR CRY FOR ME?
YES. I GUESS THAT'S HOW THE WORLD IS FAIR.
BUT YOU'RE WRONG. THE WORLD ISN'T FAIR AT ALL.
AFTER JED'S MOTHER DIED I ALSO LOVED THINGS THAT I WANTED TO HIDE AND KEEP SAFE.
?
YES.
MY YOUNGEST SON IS A LOVELY CHILD. HE STILL LIKES RUNNING AROUND BAREFOOT IN THE FIELD.
...
BUT HE'S GROWING UP WITHOUT TRULY KNOWING HIS FATHER. IS THE KING MAYBE IT'S TIME TO BRING HIM TO MY SIDE...
AND TEACH HIM HOW TO BE MY SUCCESSOR.
SUCCESSOR?

YES, HE'S MY ONLY LEGITIMATE SON.
IT'S OBVIOUS THAT HE'LL SUCCEED AFTER ME.
BUT, YOUR ONLY LEGITIMATE SON IS PRINCE JED AND PRINCE DEREK IS ALREADY YOUR SUCCESSOR!!
—?!!
COULD IT BE... YOUR UPCOMING WEDDING THIS SPRING IS TO THE MOTHER OF YOUR TRUE HEIR?!
I'VE MADE HER WAIT TOO LONG. MOREOVER, I MADE HER KEEP SUCH A BIG SECRET INSIDE HER.
THAT... YOU'VE JUST BEEN USING JED AND DEREK?
FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR THRONE?
IT WAS MORE OF A CALCULATION THAT THEY'D FIGHT EACH OTHER. I DIDN'T WANT TO WASTE MY ENERGY SQUABBLING OVER MY OWN KINGDOM WITH MY GROWN SONS.
BECAUSE I'M A VERY WORTHY KING.

BUT NOW, THE TIME HAS COME...
MY GROWN SONS SEEM TO HAVE LOST THEIR PATIENCE AND ARE BECOMING TROUBLESOME.
FOR ME TO GLADLY AND JOYFULLY BEGIN HANDING DOWN EVERYTHING TO MY TRUE SON WHOM I HAVE KEPT SAFE FROM ANY CORRUPTION.
FINALLY.
JED DOESN'T HAVE SUCH AMBITION. WHY SHOULD HE SUFFER, AS WELL?
YOU MISUNDERSTAND.
?
I DIDN'T INCLUDE JED BECAUSE OF DEREK.
I INCLUDED DEREK BECAUSE OF JED.

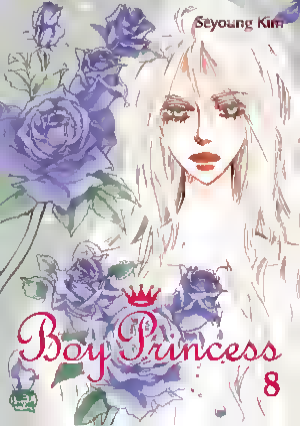
PERCH
FOR HOW LONG HAS THE KING KNOWN?
ALL I WANTED WAS FREEDOM AND YOU
BUT YOU WERE LOOKING ELSEWHERE
SOMEWHERE HIGH, DANGEROUS AND LONELY
IF THEN, WHAT HAVE I BEEN DOING ALL THIS TIME—
THOUGHT
IT DOESN'T MATTER IF I WAVER OVER SOMETHING LIKE THIS, I WOULDN'T HAVE STARTED SUCH EVIL IN THE FIRST PLACE!
I CAN'T TURN BACK THE CLOCK.
I MUST FINISH THIS ALL THE WAY TO THE END.

BANG
DEREK!
?!
MOTHER?
DEREK... MY BABY
MY EVERYTHING...
MOTHER?
I HAD TO LET HIM GO IN ORDER TO HAVE YOU
TO GIVE YOU EVERYTHING
SO...
THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE. STRIKE THE KING AND JED, NOW!


MY LAST CHANCE?
ARE NOT THE KING'S SON.
YOU...
AND-- THE KING KNOWS THIS TRUTH.

LITTLE BOY. INSTEAD OF KILLING YOURSELF LIKE THIS, WHY DON'T YOU MAKE A DEAL WITH ME?
ONCE IS ENOUGH IN MY LIFETIME FOR THIS KIND OF SUICIDAL BLACKMAIL.
THEN, I MAY BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU BOTH A CHANCE.
THIS FAINT HOPE IS ALL I HAVE TO HOLD ON TO. I'M GOING TO TRY!
I'LL DISTRACT THE GUARD WITH THIS MEDICINE...
SWING
?
BRING JED HERE AS DISCREETLY AS POSSIBLE.

OH DEAR...
YOU FOOLED ME WELL.
A MUTE PRINCE WITH
NO MEMORY?


Seyoung Kim
Boy Princess
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